

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting

Of the School Board of Independent School District No. 709 held at: virtually via video conference, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, on

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Members Present:

Kelly Durick Eder
David Kirby
Rosie Loeffler-Kemp
Jill Lofald
Alanna Oswald
Paul Sandholm

Others Present:

John Magas, Superintendent
Cathy Erickson, CFO
Melinda Thibault, Secretary

Student Representatives:

Nabiha Imtiaz (East)
Phoenix Ocean (Denfeld)

Members Absent:

Sally Trnka

- Chair Lofald called the Regular School Board meeting November 17, 2020 to order at 6:36 p.m.

M-Durick Eder, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the agenda. Upon a vote on the agenda as presented, the same was approved 6-0.

School and Community Recognition

November 2020

Anthony Bonds:

Members of the Board, this month it's my pleasure to present for recognition Amy Westbrook, MPH, Public Health Division Director and Sarah Miller RN, PHN. They're from St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services.

- Ms. Westbrook and Ms. Miller have become essential members of our response team as our school district navigates the COVID 19 pandemic.
- It is important that everyone in our school community take steps to reduce COVID-19 transmission.
- At the same time, schools are balancing the need to maintain a strong education system that effectively supports staff, students, and communities.
- Doing so in a thoughtful, strategic way requires reaching out to people with experience, training and expertise in public health and health issues.
- Ms. Westbrook and Ms. Miller are two such professionals, working in partnership with district leadership as we respond to COVID 19.
- They generously share their knowledge and provide guidance on an almost daily basis.

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- They work in partnership with our COVID Lead Crystal Diehl. They consult with Superintendent Magas. They attend meetings to provide public health information to staff and families. They assist us in making tough decisions under often challenging conditions.
- They continue to closely monitor the situation and review information as it comes from the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health. And they help us understand and incorporate that information into what we do.
- They work not only with us but with cities and townships, other school districts and the medical community.
- Ms. Westbrook, Ms Miller - Your service and support for our schools, students, families and staff are deeply appreciated. Thank you for your ongoing work to ensure what we do keeps our schools and community safe.

Public Comments
November 2020

Public comments were read into the record by the board members or played via voice messages (no public presence was allowed at the meeting) as follows (some spellings/names may be incomplete due to lack of information via voice messages):

The following people spoke regarding their thoughts and concerns related to the return to learn plan including; requests for more in person learning, concerns with the distance learning plan, not enough live learning/contact opportunities, the need for more synchronous learning, and grading policies:

Colleen Holliday, AM Lawn Care, Karin Patronas, Tobias Pedretti, Kelly Goetzman, Jeff Goetzman

The following people spoke asking the board not to cancel or delay the athletics/activities programs citing needs for student contact, and mental health concerns:

Nancy Janzig, Michael Kastelic, Wendy Burke, Lisa Maciver, Chris Fuller, Nathaniel Burke, Kristin Kartch, Kelly Goetzman, Gina Udd, Marina Udd, Jeff Goetzman

Mehgan Blair spoke to support removing the school resource officers from the schools and to request the district use the education equity framework when reviewing the contract.

Communications, Petitions, Etc.
November 2020

Chair Lofald stated that there were no communications received.

Superintendent's Report
November 2020

Student Representative Nabiha Imtiaz (East): Reported that two students recently committed to play college sports. Ethan Cole committed to UMD for baseball and Tommy Smythe committed to Elmhurst University for lacrosse. The Exec Board has been holding events the past month to boost student morale both online and they had a couple in person outdoors as well. She stated that as a student she supports the decision to close down activities and athletics due to the rising COVID cases until it is safe to return to in-person activities. She called attention to the lack of mental health resources for students and that at the School Board needs to be more intentional and devote more time to the issue because students are struggling and in need of more support. She stated that one thing that might help is switching the schedules to a Monday to Friday format because it is the system they have been using their entire and any sense of normalcy would be appreciated by students. The Thursday to Wednesday schedule does not allow students to have any time when they don't have schoolwork assigned and the constant stress, even if they aren't doing homework every single day, knowing that you have assignments hanging over you is really detrimental to our mental health and we would really benefit from having a couple days when we don't have any work assigned.

Student Representative Phoenix Ocean (Denfeld): Reported that Denfeld held an outdoor homecoming coronation ceremony and celebrated the homecoming king and queen, who exemplified Denfeld's values, as well as the whole court of students. Several students committed to colleges this week including Joe Rudd at St. Thomas for swimming and Isaac Fink at Augusta for distance running. Some activities and clubs are navigating practices and meetings online. However, many students are disappointed that their sports and activities are on hold right now. The importance of health and safety in the school and community comes first, so we hope that it is safe to return at a later date. Until then we will need to be patient and strong together. She stated that she would like to reiterate what Nabiha has said about secondary students needing more mental and emotional supports going forward and is looking forward what the superintendent has to say about that in his report.

Superintendent Magas gave an update on the return to learn planning and discussion took place regarding the update.

Chair Lofald reviewed the schedule of meetings.

Policy Committee Report
November 2020

Member Loeffler-Kemp presented the Policy Committee report which was available electronically to each school board member.

Monthly Committee of the Whole Report
November 2020

Member Lofald presented the Monthly Committee of the Whole report which was available electronically to each school board member.

Human Resources/Finance Committee Report
November 2020

Member Kirby presented the Human Resources Committee report which was available electronically to each school board member.

Consent Agenda
November 2020

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Durick Eder, to approve the Consent Agenda.

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Oswald, to pull Policy 206 from the consent agenda. Upon a vote the same was approved 6-0.

M-Lofald, S-Oswald, to remove the HR placeholder for the food service contract from the consent agenda. Upon a vote, the same was approved 6-0.

Upon a vote on the Consent Agenda as amended. the same was approved – 6-0.

Special Resolutions/Other Action Items
November 2020

None

Other
November 2020

M-Durick Eder, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0.

Chair Lofald adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of November 17, 2020 at 9:30 p.m.